

LIBRARY

Copy.

Council Offices,
STURMINSTER NEWTON,
Dorset.

11th March, 1947.

To:- The Chairman and Members of the Shaftesbury
Rural District Council.



Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1946.

The Report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of Article 17(5) of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations, 1935.

A comprehensive factual Report was submitted last year and in this year's Report facts and comments are limited to matters not previously referred to.

A disturbing rise in the number of new cases of pulmonary tuberculosis notified during the year is referred to in the Report.

The progress in the provision of new houses did little during the year to relieve the very unsatisfactory housing conditions under which many people are having to exist in the district.

In my Report for 1945 I had to draw attention to the inadequate sanitary supervision and control in the district. The appointment of an Additional Sanitary Inspector in August last has improved the situation and the proposed arrangement by which the Senior Sanitary Inspector will be relieved of duties of Licensing Officer should enable routine sanitary inspections, long neglected, to be resumed.

I am indebted to Mr. Breeds, your Sanitary Inspector and Mr. Burtt, your Waterworks Manager, for much of the information contained in the Report, and to my clerk, Mrs. Bourne, for her efficient services during the year.

I must also thank you, Madam And Gentlemen, for your courtesy and consideration throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

A. J. Brown

Medical Officer of Health.

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
TO THE
SHAFTESBURY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
for the year
1946.

1. STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health:-

Until I resumed duties as your Medical Officer of Health on 1st April, 1946, Dr. G. Bodley Scott was your temporary Medical Officer.

Sanitary Inspector:-

On 22nd August, 1946, W.N. Teasedale, A.R.S.I. assumed the duties of Additional Sanitary Inspector.

This appointment enabled a start to be made on the Housing Survey of the district called for by the Ministry of Health.

2. STATISTICS AND LOCAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area	42,000 acres.
Rateable Value	£40,646
Production of a penny rate	£169. 17s. 7d.

Vital Statistics.

These are not yet available. They will be submitted as an addendum to this report on receipt from the Registrar General.

3. WATER SUPPLIES.

General - Certain areas of the district, principally Kington Magna, Buckhorn Weston and East Stour (supplied from the Council's main supply) and Bourton (private supply) again experienced acute shortage of water as during previous years. These shortages were of a serious nature as far as the public health was concerned. The post war water schemes providing for additional supplies from a new bore hole in the Gillingham and Mere Joint scheme and from a proposed new source from a deep bore at Stubhampton are calculated to overcome these difficulties and, in addition, provide for the estimated increased future consumption (mainly agricultural) in the remainder of the district.

A great deal of thought and consideration by the Council was given during the year to decide by what means the temporary shortages could be overcome before the major schemes were in operation.

Application was made to the Ministry of Health to take additional water from the temporary supply from Melbury Abbas. After a Local Public Inquiry was held a limited additional amount of water, insufficient to meet requirements, only, was allowed by the Minister.

Consideration was given to obtaining, temporarily, additional supplies from a bore hole at Gillingham or from Bourton, by acquiring the private supply in use in that parish.

The water beneath Gillingham, as shown from all samples taken from other borings in this district, is of doubtful bacteriological purity and the cause is unknown. On that account I could not recommend the use of this water. The Bourton private supply is bacteriologically impure but the nature of the pollution known and as far as can be judged, is not from human sources. Providing some degree of protection of the source was carried out and chlorination was effected I was willing to recommend temporary use of this supply. The supply, it is anticipated will be put into use in April, 1947.

New Works carried out during the year.

1. A trial borehole was put down at Stubhampton in connection with the proposed post war scheme. The final test of the bore was postponed until 1947.
2. Mains were laid on the Lodbourne Farm Housing Site at Gillingham.

An elevated 10,000 gallon supply tank with additional larger mains was provided at Kington Magna to assist the improvement in the supply to that Parish.

Quality of Water.

There is no evidence of plumbo solvency in the Council's water. Samples from all public supplies, and from the principal private supplies in the district, were taken monthly for bacteriological examination. The principle supplies have been satisfactory bacteriologically but the Motcombe supply which has had to be supplemented periodically from the Colefield supply (already condemned) has not maintained a satisfactory standard. All the Council's supplies were chlorinated throughout the year.

Means of Supply.

There are no records available from which can be seen the proportion of houses (and persons) supplied by means of a piped supply into the house, standpipes or individual wells, throughout the district. As far as the 795 houses so far inspected under the Housing Survey are concerned 174 (or 22%) are dependent on standpipes for their supply. Insofar as the majority of the houses so far inspected are in Gillingham Parish it can reasonably be estimated that throughout the district generally approximately 30% of the houses are dependent upon standpipes for their water supply. Section 137 of the Water Act, 1937 lays down that a house shall have a piped supply into the house. When labour and materials are available the Council will have to consider action to be taken to impliment the law in this respect.

4. SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

The Council's Consulting Engineers have been asked to submit a scheme for sewerage collection and treatment for the principal parishes in the district.

Satisfactory schemes are urgently necessary in Gillingham, Kington Magna and Buckhorn Weston where fouling of rivers and streams used for watering dairy cattle, from defective drainage, is particularly evident.

5. CESS POOL EMPTYING.

This is not undertaken by the Local Authority.

6. Public Refuse Collection and Disposal.

There were no innovations during the year to report.

7. Factory effluents and river and streams Pollution.

Iwerne Minster. - Negotiations were carried on with the Bacon Company to ensure satisfactory treatment of effluent from this factory before entry to the Council sewer to avoid the treatment discharging untreated into the nearby stream.

Gas Works, Gillingham. - Negotiations were entered into in connection with the treatment of the Gas Works effluent prior to the discharge into the Council's Sewer.

Motcombe - The construction of 200 yards of drainage with settling tanks and filter were provided at the Prideaux Bacon Factory to avoid continued pollution of a stream from untreated factory sewage.

8. Housing.

A. Existing Houses.

1. Particulars of inspections of dwelling houses during the year.

- | | | |
|---------|--|-----|
| (1) (a) | Total no. of dwellings inspected for housing defects (under P.H. or Housing Acts) | 680 |
| (b) | No. of inspections made for the purpose | 889 |
| (2) (a) | No. of dwelling houses (included under (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 | - |
| (b) | No. of inspections made for the purpose | - |
| (3) | No. of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation | 115 |
| (4) | No. of dwelling houses (exclusive of those ref. to under the preceding sub.head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation | 199 |
2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notices:-
- No. of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the L.A. or their officers
3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:-
- (a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:
- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| (a) | No. of dwelling houses in respect to which notices were served requiring repairs | - |
| (b) | No. of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:- | |
| (i) | By owners | - |
| (ii) | By L.A. in default of owners | - |
- (b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:-
- | | | |
|-----|--|----|
| (1) | No. of dwelling houses in respect to which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | 60 |
| (2) | No. of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:- | |
| (a) | By owners | 1 |
| (b) | By L.A. in default of owners | - |
- (c) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:-
- | | | |
|-----|--|-----|
| (1) | No. of dwelling houses in respect to which Demolition Orders were made | - |
| (2) | No. of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | Nil |
- (d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Acts, 1936:
- | | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| (1) | No. of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made | Nil |
| (2) | No. of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit. | Nil |

The disparity between the number of houses inspected and found to have defects, and action taken in respect of them is accounted for by the fact that the majority of these inspections were carried out in the course of the Housing Survey. It would have been impossible to make progress with the Survey, and at the same time deal with all defects found - even had labour and materials been available for this purpose. Defects of only the most urgent nature could be dealt with during the year under review.

Overcrowding:-

As routine inspection for overcrowding has not been carried out no statistical report of present conditions can be made. Applications for Council Houses and circumstances found during the preliminary stages so far carried out of the Housing Survey show that very many people are living in grossly overcrowded conditions.

Housing Survey.

It was only towards the end of the year that the preliminary stages of the Housing Survey of the district called for by the Ministry of Health could be commenced. The parish of Melbury Abbas and part of Gillingham had been completed by the end of the year. The results up to that time are summarised as follows:-

Total houses in the area	2376
Total houses surveyed	602
No. of houses found to be fit or only requiring minor repairs	288
No. of houses found to require extensive repair	173
No. of houses requiring recon- ditioning	26
No. of houses only fit for demo- lition or already under Notice for Demolition	115

The general picture presented by the Survey to date, and there is no reason to believe that the completed Survey will materially alter the picture, is that approximately 50% of the houses only are fit or require only minor repairs, whilst 30% require extensive repair which can be carried out at economic cost. The remaining 20% of the houses are found to be in such a condition of disrepair or sanitary defect that they cannot be made fit at economic cost and, of these, two thirds are fit only for demolition.

Requisitioned premises, etc.

The number of houses held under requisition by the Council at the end of the year for the housing of evacuees or other inadequately housed persons was - 59.

27 houses on which Demolition or Closing Orders had already been made were occupied under Licence by you, and the majority of the 80 houses on which Demolition Orders have been made in the past and which have not been demolished were occupied but not under licence.

B. New Houses.

The number of completed new houses provided by the Local Authority during the year was as follows:-

1. Temporary prefabricated hungalows	Nil
2. Swedish Timber Houses	8
3. Traditional type	Nil

At the end of the year the total number of applications outstanding for houses were .

From residents within the district
From residents outside the district

Allocation of new housing.

Preliminary allocation is made by a Selection Committee on the merits of each applicant.

The information with regard to overcrowding and insanitary conditions brought to light by the Housing Survey and now available should prove helpful to the Committee in ensuring that reasonable preference is given to applicants living under insanitary or overcrowded conditions as required by Section 85 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Population.

I have not previously drawn your attention to the changing structure of the population of the country. Whilst the expectation of life has steadily increased the birth rate has steadily fallen. The result is, that although the population of the country is still increasing it is doing so chiefly on account of a larger number of persons reaching an advanced age. Whilst in 1900 there were less than 2 million persons over 65 years of age, it is estimated that by 1951 there will be over 5½ million persons over 65 years of age. The implications of such a change in the structure of the population is of grave economic consequence, but I bring the matter to your particular notice to emphasise the need for adequate provision being made for the proper care and housing of elderly persons who by reason of age or infirmity cannot look after themselves. Whilst the care of such persons is not directly your responsibility a local Housing Authority can do much to assist and make happier the life of aged persons, by the provision of suitable accommodation designed to meet their particular needs. Not only does the provision of small and easily erected two or three roomed dwellings, appropriately planned for occupation by aged persons, make life more comfortable for such persons, but also allows the often more spacious accommodation vacated by them to be available for use by younger couples with children.

It is estimated that 15% of Council Houses now built could usefully be of a type suitable for aged persons. It is felt that it is advantageous for such dwellings to be placed on council estates where the older people are near to their young relatives who would be readily available to give them the help they may require.

9. SANITARY INSPECTIONS.

No. of sanitary inspections carried out during the year:-

(1) Total number of inspections (under all headings)	1773
Total number of Informal Notices served	62
Total number of Informal Notices complied with	13
Total number of Statutory Notices served	4
Total number of Statutory Notices complied with	3

(2) No. of inspections carried out during the year under:-

(a) Factories Act	9
(b) Shops Act	19

(3) No. of sanitary inspections of schools 1

An analyses of sanitary facilities as revealed by the Housing Survey as far as carried out during the year shows that:-

Of the 743 houses inspected in Gillingham 502 (68%) have no baths. Of the 795 houses inspected, upon which Demolition Orders have not been made, 248 (30%) have bucket closets or vault middens. And of the 795 houses 174 (22%) have no sinks and are dependent for their water supply on an outside stand pipe.

When considering these figures it must be borne in mind that they refer principally to the most urbanised parish in the district - Gillingham.

The figures reveal a low standard of sanitation, emphasising that not only are many people at present living under seriously overcrowded conditions but that many of the same people live without decent sanitary facilities or reasonable domestic amenities.

10. SUPERVISION OF FOOD AND MILK SUPPLIES.

(a) Food and Drugs Act, 1938. Milk & Dairies Order, 1926.

Milk supply.

No. of persons on Register at the end of 1946	261
No. of dairy farms and other dairy premises on register at the end of 1946	266
No. of dairy farms inspected during 1946	32
No. of inspections	63

No. of Notices served	4
No. of Notices complied with	-
No. of milk shops inspected during 1946	3
No. of inspections	45
No. of Notices served	-
No. complied with	-

During the year one of the principle milk purveyors in the district started a well equipped dairy in the Gillingham district which has been licenced for the retailing of Pasteurised and Tuberculin Tested Milk. This dairy should prove to be of benefit to the district in that it will enable many schools and other consumers to be supplied with Pasteurised milk.

(b) Ice-Cream -- Number of inspections carried out at:-

(i) Premises registered for the manufacture of ice-cream or prepared meals, etc.	}	NIL
(ii) Food premises (otherwise subject to the Food and Drugs Act, 1938)		
(iii) No. of Notices served		
(iv) No. of Notices complied with		

This return again demonstrates the serious deficiency in routine sanitary inspections and supervision carried out during the year.

(c) Meat.

Number of post mortem inspections carried out 20,011
Details of inspections:-

Carcases inspected and condemned:

	<u>Pigs.</u>
Number killed (if known)	23,663
Number inspected	20,011
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis</u>	
Whole carcasses condemned	1
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned	13
Percentage of the No. inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	0.06
<u>Tuberculosis only.</u>	
Whole carcasses condemned	48
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned	1,619
Percentage of the No. inspected affected with Tuberculosis	8.09

Toward the latter part of the year the Council appointed Col. Sealy Green (M.R.C.V.S.) as its meat inspector for all purposes to relieve its Sanitary Inspector of these duties and to enable 100% inspection to be carried out at all the three bacon factories in the district.

(d) Other Foods.

Weights (in lbs) of food inspected and condemned -

Tinned Milk	3.0	Potatoes	1064.0
Tinned fish	5.44	Bread	120.0
Tinned soup	1.5	Dried Peas	10.5
Tinned fruit	5.44	Margarine	1.0
Tinned beans	3.44	Butter	0.5
Tinned peas	7.19	Cooking fat	0.25
Tinned meat & veg.	10.0	Sugar	3.0
Corned beef	10.75	Cheese	0.75
Fish	126.0	Sultanas	0.5
Meat	25.0	Bacon	7.5

Total 1405.76

Food Handling.

Outbreaks of disease due to bacterial contamination of food during preparation or sale are by no means uncommon. Only those of general public interest reach the public press.

You have been free of any such outbreak in your district. Nevertheless, I can feel no confidence that the population is safeguarded against infection from food, ice-cream, etc. when the generally accepted standard of hygiene amongst food handlers throughout the country is so low. The standards laid down in Section 13 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 are inadequate and do not apply to all premises. No provision is made for adequate wrapping of food stuffs and it is regretted that the new draft regulations, with regard to the manufacture of ice-cream do not call for proper sterilisation of utensils used, or lay down a bacterial standard of purity.

11. NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASE (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS).

<u>Disease.</u>	<u>Total Cases Notified.</u>	<u>Cases admitted to Hospital.</u>	<u>Deaths.</u>
Whooping Cough	4	-	Nil
Scarlet Fever	18	14	"
Measles	9	-	"
Amosbic Dysentery	1	-	"
Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	1	1	"

The end of the year saw the closure of the North Dorset Joint Hospital Board's Temporary Isolation Hospital at Vine House, Sturminster Newton. Provided that beds are available, cases of infectious disease requiring hospital treatment will, in future, be admitted to hospitals under the control of surrounding authorities at South Petherton, Poole or Salisbury. The closure of the local Isolation Hospital means that some cases of infectious disease which normally would be admitted to hospital will have to remain at home. This will be particularly so when infectious disease is epidemic, and there is an increased demand for beds from authorities already having prior claim on the hospitals referred to.

12. DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

A Special Report on this subject was presented to you early in the current year.

	<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>Over 5.</u>
Total number of children who completed course of treatment during the year	139	39

13. TUBERCULOSIS.

Cases notified:-

<u>New Cases.</u>		<u>Deaths.</u>	
<u>Respiratory</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory.</u>	<u>Respiratory.</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory.</u>
10	-	4	-

It will be seen that 10 new cases of pulmonary tuberculosis were notified during the year. This was a higher number than have been notified in recent years. The following table shows notifications each year since 1938:-

1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946
2	3	5	4	3	1	4	6	10

When small figures are under consideration one has to be careful against contributing undue significance to them. I do, However, feel that this increased incidence, not shared by other areas in North Dorset or in the County as a whole, cannot be ignored and must be brought to your notice.

N.F. Pearson

Medical Officer of Health.

11th March, 1947.

ADDENDUM TO ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH TO THE
SHAFTESBURY RURAL DISTRICT,
FOR THE YEAR - 1946.

POPULATION - (Registrar General's Estimate) - 8,443

LIVE BIRTHS -	Total	Male	Female		
	147	73	74		
	Legitimate	67	68		
	Illegitimate	6	6		
				} Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 17.4	
				} = 15.8	
				} 19.1	

Comparative figures for
(a) North Dorset (b) England & Wales

STILLBIRTHS -	6	4	2	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 0.7	0.53	0.53
DEATHS -	130	56	74	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 15.3	13.1	11.5

Deaths from Maternal Causes -	Nil	
" in Infants under one year	4	Infantile Death Rate per 1,000 live births = 27.2
" from preventable disease	5	Tuberculosis 4 31.6
		Influenza 1 43.

Medical Officer of Health.



